

## **LARRY HAZZARD, Sr.**

### **BIOGRAPHY**

Former three-time Golden Glove Champion, Larry Hazzard, Sr., was the chief boxing referee in New Jersey when he was appointed Commissioner of the State Athletic Control Board in late 1985 by Governor Tom Kean.

Born in Newark, NJ, Hazzard first took an interest in boxing as an elementary school student in Newark in the 1950's. The greatest legends in boxing, including Joe Louis and Sugar Ray Robinson, inspired him to seek a career in boxing. Not only did he admire their abilities in boxing, but also their contributions to mankind.

While attending Central High School in Newark, Hazzard reached the peak of his amateur boxing career. A three-time Golden Glove Champion in the 1960's, he also won the New Jersey A.A.U. Championship during the same time period.

In 1967, he began his noted career as a referee. During his spare time, he refereed amateur boxing throughout the tri-state area. Though he loved the sport of boxing in particular, Hazzard yearned to expand his combative sports participation. He began to study the martial arts, specialized in Ju-Jitsu and eventually attained the coveted Black Belt in 1968. For the next twelve years, Hazzard was a martial arts instructor.

Hazzard's studious nature extended beyond combative sports as he earned an Associate of Arts Degree from Essex County College in 1970 and a Bachelor of Arts Degree (cum laude) from Montclair State University in 1972. That same year, he accepted his first teaching job at Arts High School as a Physical Education and Health Instructor. He later became Athletic Director and served as the Department Chairman and the Girls Head Track Coach.

In 1978, Hazzard began his professional refereeing career while attending a graduate program at Montclair State. He received his Master's Degree in Administration and Supervision of Education in 1980. Subsequently, he became Vice Principal at Westside High School in Newark and Principal of Broadway Junior High School in Newark.

Quantas Magazine and Timex Corporation elected him "Referee of the Year" in 1983. By 1985, he had refereed numerous world championship fights in every weight class around the world, involving some of the greatest boxers of the modern boxing era.

He was sworn in as Athletic Commissioner for the State of New Jersey on February 27, 1986. Under Hazzard's leadership, New Jersey has emerged as a major world boxing venue. It is recognized as having the most comprehensive rules, regulations and policies for enforcing safe, professional boxing.

As Commissioner, Hazzard is most recognized worldwide as a leader and authority in the boxing industry. His efforts to establish rules and regulations that maximize safety

during competitions, as well as the successful development and implementation of the nationally recognized Unified Championship Rules have motivated other boxing governing organizations to do likewise. He has also been responsible for world-class boxing officiating changes, including the development and implementation of the 10-Point Majority Scoring System.

Hazzard has conducted numerous refereeing seminars for world sanctioning organizations and state commissions around the country, and is a frequent guest on various television and radio programs involving boxing. He has also lectured to graduate students of Sports Administration at Temple University in Philadelphia, PA, and has been the subject of numerous magazine and newspaper articles involving the progressive and innovative administration of professional boxing.

Hazzard's involvement in the sport of boxing has taken him well beyond the ring. The author of two publications, "A Conceptual Approach to Refereeing" and "The Ringleader: A Boxing Referee's Guide to Greatness," Hazzard also played his hand at acting on the big screen. His debut role came in 1987 in the film, "Homeboys", starring Mickey Rourke. His portrayal of the late referee, Zachary Clayton, in the major motion picture film, "Ali", starring Will Smith, has been his most memorable role. Hazzard also appeared in the HBO television series, "Oz", and in the HBO television movie, "Undeclared", starring John Leguizamo.

On November 14, 1986, Hazzard was inducted into the New Jersey Boxing Hall of Fame. In 1989, he was voted "Boxing Commissioner of the Year" by the World Boxing Association. On June 13, 1991, Hazzard was inducted into the Newark Athletic Hall of Fame. The New Jersey Sports Writers Association inducted Hazzard into its Hall of Fame on February 2, 1992, noting his outstanding career as a boxing referee and commissioner, and in 1998, he was recognized by City News as one of its 100 Most Influential People. In January 2001, he was inducted into Action Martial Arts Magazine's Hall of Fame. In 2005, Hazzard was selected as the Administrator of the year by the American Association of Professional Ringside Physicians.

In May 2002, Hazzard founded the amateur boxing non-profit organization, Community Organization Making Boxing Alternatives Today for Tomorrow (C.O.M.B.A.T.T., Inc.) This youth organization provides a safe haven for inner-city youths interested in boxing, and offers educational, economical, social, health, nutrition, job-readiness assistance and makes appropriate referrals. Hazzard has been a lifelong member of the St. James AME Church of Newark, NJ, and a former member of its Preparatory School Board. He is also a former member of the Essex County College Foundation Board and the former Director of the North Eastern Region of the Association of Boxing Commissions, in addition to his lifetime membership with the N.A.A.C.P. Hazzard is currently a member of the Screen Actors Guild.

Hazzard and his wife, Patricia have three children and six grandchildren. They reside in Northern New Jersey.